

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 062921

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, US

SUBJECT: NATO FORCE GOALS FOR THE US

REF: USNATO 2271, DTG 041427Z MAR 78

1. AS REGARDS THE REASONABLE CHALLENGE WHICH NATO FORCE  
GOALS POSE FOR EACH COUNTRY FOR AN EFFORT OVER AND  
ABOVE THAT IN ITS PREVIOUS FORCE PLANS, WE RECOGNIZE  
THAT SUCH A CHALLENGE RESULTS FROM A COLLECTIVE NATO  
DECISION. THE COUNTRY SO CHALLENGED NORMALLY CAN TRY  
TO RESIST THE IMPOSITION OF SUCH A CHALLENGE ONLY  
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THROUGH AN EXPOSITION OF THE FACTS OF ITS DEFENSE EFFORTS.  
2. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT MINISTERS IN MAY 1977 SET THE  
AIM AT THREE PERCENT WITH THOSE COUNTRIES NOT UP TO PAR  
CALLED ON TO GO ABOVE THREE PERCENT.

3. THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF NOW, HOWEVER SEEMS TO BE  
USING THE PROCESS OF CONVERTING NMA FORCE PROPOSALS INTO

DRAFT FORCE GOALS AS A MEANS TO INDUCE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE INDICATED ACCEPTANCE OF THE 3 PERCENT LEVEL TO ACCEPT A SECOND, STILL HIGHER LEVEL OF CHALLENGE. WE COULD AGREE THAT THIS INTERNATIONAL STAFF TACTIC MAKES SENSE IF AIMED AT GETTING MORE FROM COUNTRIES THAT HAVE TENDED TO DO LESS, BUT QUESTION ITS APPLICATION TO NATIONS THAT

CONSISTENTLY MEET OR EXCEED BOTH THE CHALLENGE AND THE COMMITMENTS.

4. MOREOVER, WE HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THE VIEW THAT THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE CONSTITUTES A GENERAL ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR FORWARD DEFENSE PLANNING. THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE PUT FORWARD IN THE FORCE GOAL CONTEXT IS RELATED TO SPECIFIC FORCE GOALS. THUS, IT LEAVES UNCOVERED SUCH DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AS LTDP MEASURES NOT COVERED IN FORCE GOALS ALREADY, INCREASES IN NATO INFRASTRUCTURE AND IN NATIONAL DEFENSE EXPENDITURES ON LOGISTICS AND OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE -- ALL OF WHICH TO DATE HAVE REMAINED OUTSIDE THE PURVIEW OF NATO FORCE PLANNING. HENCE, THE DIFFICULTIES: (1) THE CHALLENGE WOULD BE NOT SO MUCH TO A HIGHER LEVEL OF DEFENSE EFFORT BUT RATHER TO SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL ACTIONS PRECISELY DEFINED; (2) THE ACTIONS CONCERNED WOULD FALL WITHIN THE CURRENT SCOPE OF NATO FORCE PLANNING AND IT GIVES NO CONSIDERATION TO THE BROADER DEFENSE PRO-  
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GRAMMING ENVISIONED IN THE LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM SET IN MOTION BY THE 1977 SUMMIT.

5. OUR PREFERRED APPROACH WOULD USE TWO CRITERIA FOR DRC ACTION IN FORMULATION OF DRAFT FORCE GOALS. WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A REASONABLE ADDITIONAL EFFORT BY EACH COUNTRY, THE FIRST CRITERIA WOULD BE TO IDENTIFY THE KEY FORCE PLANNING ACTIONS NEEDED FROM THAT COUNTRY IN NATO COALITION DEFENSE, AND THE SECOND TO PUSH HARDER ON THOSE COUNTRIES WHOSE BASIC FORCE LEVEL EFFORT IS LOW.

6. WE RELY ON MISSION'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE BASIC FACTS OF THE US DEFENSE EFFORT - 5.5 PERCENT OF GDP FOR DEFENSE, HIGH MANNING LEVELS, A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL LABOR FORCE IN DEFENSE ACTIVITY, A HIGH DEGREE OF MODERNIZATION IN EQUIPMENT, ETC. - TO ENSURE THAT THE FORCE GOALS FOR THE UNITED STATES EMBODY A REASONABLE CHALLENGE FORMULATED IN LIGHT OF THE HIGH LEVEL OF OUR CURRENT AND PROJECTED EFFORT AND EXPRESSED IN FORCE OBJECTIVES APPROPRIATE TO THE UNITED STATES AND HAVING HIGH PRIORITY IN NATO COALITION DEFENSE.

7. AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, QUITE APART FROM THE QUESTION OF FUNDING FOR THE LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM, WE WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC WITH ANY FORMULATION WHICH WOULD EQUATE A DRC FORCE GOAL CHALLENGE OF ONE PERCENT TO EUROPEAN NATO (TOTAL DEFENSE SPENDING, LESS GREECE AND TURKEY, AS 3.6 PERCENT OF GDP) WITH THAT OF A SIMILAR CHALLENGE TO THE US

(TOTAL DEFENSE SPENDING AS 5.5 PERCENT OF GDP).

8. IN SUMMARY, WHILE WE DO NOT EXPECT US POSITION TO SURVIVE UNTOUCHED OR EVEN UNSCATHED, NEITHER DO WE EXPECT DRC ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN TOTAL DISREGARD OF CONFIDENTIAL

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DIMENSIONS OF CURRENT AND PLANNED US DEFENSE EFFORT.

9. ADDITIONALLY, YOU SHOULD MAKE POINT THAT US EXPECTS THAT SOME PART OF ITS FUTURE DEFENSE SPENDING WILL BE DEVOTED TO SUPPORT OF LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM ACTIONS, AND THEREFORE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR ADDITIONAL FORCE GOAL CHALLENGES.

10. THE FOREGOING IS NOT MEANT TO PREJUDICE THE US POSITION ON KEY 1979-1986 FORCE PROPOSALS (SUCH AS AMO4, AMO5 AND AMO7) ON WHICH WE HAVE RESERVED PENDING REVIEW OF THE NAVAL FORCE PLANNING STUDY AND OTHER STUDIES NOW IN PROGRESS.

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